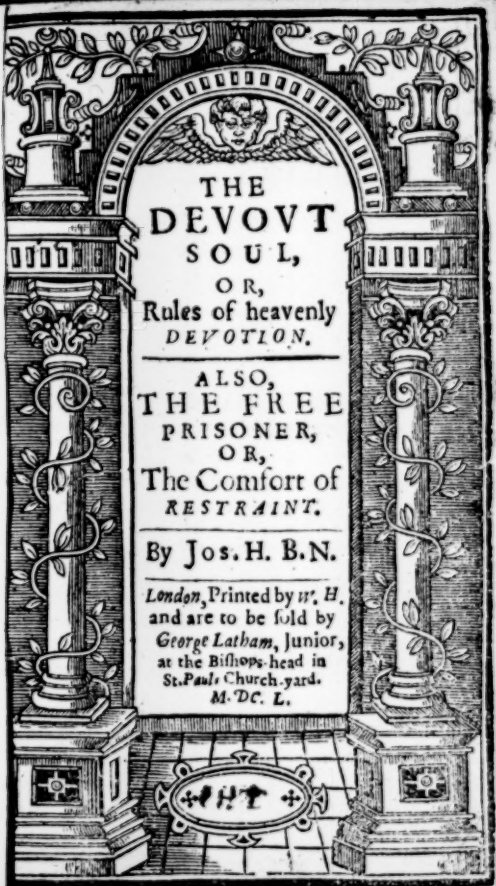

THE DEVOUT SOUL,

OR,

Rules of heavenly *DEVOTION.*

ALSO,

THE FREE PRISONER,

OR,

The Comfort of *RESTRAINT.*

By Jos. H. B. N.

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TO All Christian Readers,

Grace and Peace,

THat in a time when we heare no noise but of Drums and Trumpets, and talk of nothing but armes, and sieges, & battels, I should write of Devotion, may seem to some of you strange & unseasonable; to me, contrarily, it seems most fit and opportune; For when can it be more proper to direct our adress to the throne of grace, than when we are in the very jawes of Death? or when should we goe to seek the face of our God, rather, than in the needfull time of trouble?

To the Reader.

Blessed be my God, who in the midst of these wofull tumults, hath vouchsafed to give me these calm, & holy thoughts; which I justly suppose, he meant not to suggest, that they should be smothered in the breast wherein they were conceived, but with a purpose to have the benefit communicated unto many. Who is there that needs not vehement excitations, and helps to Devotion? and when more than now? In a tempest the Mariners themselves doe not only cry every man to his God, but awaken Jonah, *that is fast asleep under the hatches, and chide him to his prayers. Surely, had we not bin failing in our devotions, we could not have been thus universally miserable; That duty, the neglect whereof is guilty of our cala-*

mity, must in the effectuall performance of it, be the meanes of our recovery. Be but devout, and we cannot miscarry under judgements; Wee is mee, the teares of penitence, were more fit to quench the publique flame, than bloud. How soone would it clear up above head, if wee were but holily affected within? Could wee send our zealous Ambassadours up to heaven, we could not fail of an happy peace. I direct the way; God bring us to the end; For my owne particular practice; God is witnesse to my soule, that (as one, the sense of whose private affliction is swallowed up of the publique) I cease not daily to ply the Father of mercies with my fervent prayers, that hee would, at last, be pleased, after so many streames of bloud, to

passe an Act of Pacification in heaven: And what good heart can do otherwise? Brethren, all ye that love God, and his Church, and his Truth, and his Anointed, and your Country, & your selves, and yours, joyn your forces with mine, and let us by an holy violence make way to the gates of Heaven with our petition, for mercy and peace; and not suffer our selves to be beaten off from the threshold of Grace, till wee be answered with a condescent. He, whose goodness is wont to prevent our desires, will not give denyals to our importunities.

Pray, and farewell.

NORWICH.

March 20. 1643.

Chauncy Hare Townsend

THE DEVOUT SOVLE.

SECT. I.

DEvotion is the life of Religion, the very ſoule of Piety, the higheſt imploiment of grace; and no other than the prepoſſeſſion of heaven by the Saints of God here upon earth; every improvement whereof is of more advantage and value to the Chriſtian ſoul, than all the profit & contentments which this

world can afford it.

There is a kind of Art of Devotion (if we can attain unto it) whereby the practice thereof may bee much advanced: We have known indeed some holy soules, which out of the generall precepts of piety, and their own happy experiments of Gods mercy, have, through the grace of God, grown to a great measure of perfection this way; which yet might have been much expedited, and compleated, by those helps, which the greater illumination and experience of others might have afforded them: Like as we see it in other faculties; there are those, who out of a naturall dexterity, and their own frequent practice, have got

got into a safe posture of defence, and have handled their weapon with commendable skill, whom yet the Fence-schoole might have raised to an higher pitch of cunning: As nature is perfited, so grace is not a little furthered by Art; since it pleaseth the wisedome of God, to work ordinarily upon the soul, not by the immediate power of miracle, but in such methods, and by such means, as may most conduce to his blessed ends. It is true, that all our good motions come from the Spirit of God; neither is it lesse true, that all the good counsails of others proceed from the same Spirit; & that good Spirit cannot be crosse to itself; he therefore that infu-

ſes good thoughts into us, ſuggeſts alſo ſuch directions, as may render us apt both to receive and improve them: If God be bounteous, we may not be idle, and neglective of our ſpirituall aids.

SECT. II.

IF you tell me(by way of inſtance in a particular act of Devotion) that there is a gift of prayer, and that the Spirit of God is not tied to rules; I yeeld both theſe; but withall, I muſt ſay there are alſo helps of prayer, and that we muſt not expect immediate inſpirations: I find the world much miſtaken in both; They thinke that

that man hath the gift of prayer, that can utter the thoughts of his heart roundly unto God, that can expresse himself smoothly in the phrase of the holy Ghost, and presse God with most proper words, & passionate vehemence: And surely this is a commendable faculty whersoever it is: but this is not the gift of prayer; you may call it, if you will, the gift of Elocution. Doe wee say that man hath the gift of pleading, that can talk eloquently at the Barre, that can in good termes loud and earnestly importune the Judge for his Client; and not rather hee that brings the strongest reason, and quotes his books, and precedents with most truth,

and cleareſt evidence, ſo as may convince the Jury, and perſwade the Judge? Do wee ſay hee hath the gift of Preaching, that can deliver himſelf in a flowing manner of ſpeech, to his hearers, that can cite Scriptures, or Fathers, that can pleaſe his auditory with the flowers of Rhetorick; or rather, he, that can divide the Word aright, interpret it ſoundly, apply it judiciouſly, put it home to the Conſcience, ſpeaking in the evidence of the Spirit, powerfully convincing the gainſayers, comforting the dejected, and drawing every ſoule nearer to heaven? The like muſt we ſay for prayer; the gift whereof hee may be truely ſaid to have, not that hath the

the moſt rennible tongue, (for prayer is not ſo much a matter of the lips, as of the heart) but he, that hath the moſt illuminated apprehenſion of the God to whom he ſpeakes, the deepeſt ſenſe of his own wants, the moſt eager longings after grace, the ferventeſt deſires of ſupplies from heaven; and in a word, whoſe heart ſends up the ſtrongeſt groanes and cries to the Father of mercies.

Neither may we look for *Enthuſiaſmes*, & immediate inſpirations; putting our ſelves upon Gods Spirit, in the ſolemn exerciſes of our invocation, without heed, or meditation; the dangerous inconvenience wherof hath been too often found in the raſh, and unwarrantable expreſſions

preſſions, that have fallen from the mouths of unwary ſuppliants; but we muſt addreſſe our ſelves with due preparation, to that holy worke; we muſt digeſt our ſutes; & fore-order our ſupplications to the Almighty; ſo that there may be excellent and neceſſary uſe of meet rules of our Devotion.

He, whoſe Spirit helps us to pray, and whoſe lips taught us how to pray, is an all-ſufficient example for us: all the skill of men, and Angels, cannot afford a more exquiſite modell of ſupplicatory Devotion, than that bleſſed Saviour of ours gave us in the mount; led in by a divine, and heart-raiſing preface, carried out with a a ſtrong and heavenly enforce-

forcement; wherein an awfull compellation makes way for petition; and petition makes way for thanksgiving; the petitions marshalled in a most exact order, for spirituall blessings, which have an immediate concernment of God, in the first place; then for temporall favours, which concern our selves, in the second; so punctuall a method had not been observed by him that heareth prayers, if it had been all one to him, to have had our Devotions confused, and tumultuary.

Sect. III.

THere is commonly much mistaking of Devotion, as if it were nothing

thing but an act of vocall prayer, expiring with that holy breath, and revived with the next taske of our invocation; which is usually measured of many, by frequence, length, smoothnesse of expression, lowdnes, vehemence; Whereas, indeed it is rather an habituall disposition of an holy soul, sweetly conversing with God, in all the forms of an heavenly (yet awfull) familiarity; and a constant entertainment of our selves here below with the God of spirits, in our sanctified thoughts, and affections; One of the noble exercises whereof, is our accesse to the throne of grace in our prayers; whereto may be added, the ordering of our holy attendance

dance upon the bleſſed word & ſacraments of the Almighty: Nothing hinders therefore, but that a ſtammering ſuppliant may reach to a more eminent devotion, than hee that can deliver himſelf in the moſt fluent and patheticall formes of Elocution; and that our ſilence may bee more devout than our noiſe. We ſhall not need to ſend you to the Cels or Cloyſters for this skill; although it will hardly be believed, how far ſome of their Contemplative men have gone in the Theory hereof; Perhaps, like as Chymiſts give rules for the attaining of that *Elixir*, which they never found; for ſure they muſt needs fail of that perfection they pretend;

tend; who erre commonly in the object of it, alwayes in the ground of it, which is faith; ſtripped, by their opinion, of the comfortableſt uſe of it, certainty of application.

SECT. IV.

AS there may be many reſemblances betwixt Light and Devotion, ſo this one eſpecially; that as there is a light univerſally diffuſed through the aire, and there is a particular recollection of light into the body of the Sun and Stars; ſo it is in Devotion; There is a generall kind of Devotion that goes through the renewed heart and life of a Chri-

Christian, which wee may terme *Habitual*, and *Virtual*; and there is a speciall, and fixed exercise of Devotion, which we name *Actuall*.

The soule that is rightly affected to God, is never void of an holy Devotion; where ever it is, what ever it doth, it is still lifted up to God, and fastned upon him, and converses with him; ever serving the Lord in feare, and rejoycing in him with trembling.

For the effectuall performance whereof, it is requisite first, that the heart bee setled in a right apprehension of our God; without which, our Devotion is not thankleſſe onely, but sinfull: With much labour therefore, & agitation of a mind illu-

illuminated from above, we must find our selves wrought to an high, awfull, adorative, and constant conceit of that incomprehensible Majesty, in whom wee live, and move, and are; One God, in three most glorious Persons, infinite in wisdome, in power, in justice, in mercy, in providence, in all that he is, in all that he hath, in all that he doth; dwelling in light inaccessible, attended with thousand thousands of Angels; whom yet we neither can know, (neither would it availe us if we could) but in the face of the eternall Son of his Love, our blessed Mediatour God and Man; who sits at the right hand of Majesty in the highest hea-

heavens; from the ſight of whoſe glorious humanity, we comfortably riſe to the contemplation of that infinite Deity, whereto it is inſeparably united; in and by him, (made ours by a lively Faith) finding our perſons, and obedience accepted, expecting our ful redemption, and bleſſedneſſe. Here, here muſt our hearts be unremoveably fixed; In his light muſt we ſee light: no cloudy occurrences of this world, no buſie imployments, no painfull ſufferings muſt hinder us from thus ſeeing him that is inviſible.

Sect. V.

NEither doth the devout heart ſee his God aloof off

off, as dwelling above, in the circle of heaven, but beholds that infinite Spirit really present with him; *The Lord is upon thy right hand*, saith the Psalmist. Our bodily eye doth not more certainly see our owne flesh, than the spirituall eye sees God, close by us; Yea in us; A mans own soule is not so intimate to himselfe, as God is to his soule; neither do we move by him only, but in him: What a sweet conversation therefore, hath the holy soul with his God? What heavenly conferences have they two, which the world is not privy to; while God entertains the soul with the divine motions of his Spirit, the soul entertaines God with gracious compliances?

pliances? Is the heart heavy with the grievous preſſures of affliction? the ſoule goes in to his God, and pours out it ſelfe before him in earneſt bemoanings, and ſupplications; the God of mercy anſwers the ſoule again, with ſeaſonable refreſhings of comfort: Is the heart ſecretly wounded and bleeding with the conſcience of ſome ſinne? it ſpeediiy betakes it ſelfe to the great Phyſician of the ſoul, who forthwith applyes the balm of Gilead for an unfailing and preſent cure: Is the heart diſtracted with doubts? the ſoule retires to that inward Oracle of God for counſail, he returnes to the ſoule an happy ſettlement of juſt reſolution: Is the heart deeply affect-

affected with the sense of some speciall favour from his God? the soul breaks forth into the passionate voice of praise & thanksgiving; God returns the pleasing testimony of a cheerful acceptation: Oh blessed soul, that hath a God to go unto upon all occasions; Oh infinite mercy of a God, that vouchsafes to stoop to such intirences with dust & ashes.

Dr. *Preston* It was a gracious speech of a worthy Divine upon his death-bed, now breathing towards heaven, That he should change his place not his company: His conversation was now before hand with his God, and his holy Angels; the only difference was, that he was now going to a more free and full fruition

tion of the Lord of life, in that region of glory above, whom he had truly (though with weaknes and imperfection) injoyed in this vale of tears.

SECT. VI.

NOw, that these mutuall respects may be sure not to coole with intermission, the devout heart takes all occasions both to thinke of God, and to speak to him. There is nothing that hee sees, which doth not bring God to his thoughts. Indeed, there is no creature, wherein there are not manifest footsteps of omnipotence; Yea, which hath not a tongue to tell us of it's Maker. *The heaven declare the* Psa. 19 1, 2

the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-worke; one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another: Yea, O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdome haſt thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches. ſo is the great and wide ſea, where are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts: Every herb, flower, ſpire of graſſe, every twig and leaf; every worm and fly; every ſcale and feather; every billow and meteor, ſpeaks the power and wiſdom of their infinite Creator; *Solomon* ſends the ſluggard to the Ant; *Eſay* ſends the Jews to the Ox and the Aſſe; Our Saviour ſends his Diſciples to the Ravens, & to the Lillies of the field;

*Pſa.*104.24.

There

There is no creature of whom we may not learn something; we shall have spent our time ill in this great schoole of the world, if in such store of Lessons, we be non-proficients in Devotion. Vaine Idolaters make to themselves Images of God, whereby they sinfully represent him to their thoughts and adoration; could they have the wit and grace to see it, God hath taken order to spare them this labor, in that he hath stamped in every creature such impressions of his infinite power, wisdome, goodnes, as may give us just occasion to worship and praise him with a safe and holy advantage to our soules: *For the invisible things of God, from*

the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and Godhead. And indeed, wherefore serve all the volumes of Naturall History, but to be so many Commentaries upon the severall creatures, wherein we may read God; and even those men who have not the skill, or leisure to peruse them, may yet out of their own thoughts, and observation, raise from the sight of all the works of God sufficient matter to glorifie him. Who can be so stupid as not to take notice of the industry of the Bee, the providence of the Ant, the cunning of the Spider, the reviving of the Flye, the worms endeavour of revenge,

venge, the ſubtilty of the Foxe, the ſagacity of the Hedge-hog, the innocence and profitableneſſe of the Sheep, the laborioufneſſe of the Oxe, the obſequiouſneſs of the Dog, the timorous ſhifts of the Hare, the nimbleneſſe of the Dear, the generoſity of the Lion, the courage of the Horſe, the fierceneſſe of the Tiger, the chearful muſick of Birds, the harmleſneſſe of the Dove, the true love of the Turtle, the Cocks obſervation of time, the Swallows architecture, ſhortly, (for it were eaſie here to be endleſſe) of the ſeverall qualities, and diſpoſitions of every of theſe our fellow-creatures, with whom we converſe on the face of the earth; and

who that takes notice of them, cannot fetch from every act, and motion of theirs, some monition of duty, and occasion of devout thoughts? Surely, I fear many of us Christians, may justly accuse our selves as too neglective of our duty this way; that having thus long spent our time in this great Academy of the world, we have not, by so many silent documents, learned to ascribe more glory to our Creator; I doubr those creatures if they could exchange their brutality with our reason, being now so docible as to learn of us so far as their sense can reach, would approve themselves better Scholars to us, than we have been unto them.

Withall,

Withall, I must add that the devout soul stands not alwaies in need of such outward monitors, but findes within it selfe, sufficient incitements to raise up it self to a continuall minding of God; and makes use of them accordingly; and, if at any time, being taken up with importunate occasions of the world, it finds God missing but an hour, it chides it selfe for such neglect, and sets it self to recover him with so much more eager affection: as the faithfull spouse in the *Canticles*, when she finds him whom her soul loved, withdrawn from her for a season, puts her self into a speedy search after him, and gives not over till shee have attained his presence. Cant. 5. 6.

Sect. VII.

NOw as these many monitors both outward & inward, must elevate our hearts very frequently, to God; so those raised hearts must not entertain him with a dumbe contemplation, but must speak to him in the language of spirits: All occasions therefore must be taken of sending forth pious and heavenly ejaculations to God; The devout soul may doe this more than an hundred times a day, without any hindrance to his speciall vocation: The Huswife at her Wheel, the Weaver at his Loome, the Husbandman at his Plough, the Artificer in his Shop, the

the Traveller in his way, the Merchant in his Warehouse may thus enjoy God in his busiest imploiment; For, the soule of man is a nimble spirit; and the language of thoughts needs not take up time; and though we now, for examples sake, cloath them in words, yet in our practice we need not: Now these *Ejaculations* may bee either *at large*, or *Occasionall*: At large, such as that of old *Jacob*, *O Lord I have waited for thy salvation*; Or that of *David*, *O save me for thy mercies sake:* And these either in matter of *Humiliation*, or of *Imploration*, or of *Thanksgiving*: In all which, we cannot follow a better pattern than the sweet singer of *Israel*, whose heavenly

conceptions we may either borrow, or imitate.

In way of *humiliation*, such as these. *Heal my soul O Lord, for I have sinned against thee.* Psa. 41. 4. *Oh remember not my old sins, but have mercy upon mee.* 79. 8. *If thou wilt be extreme to mark what is done amisse, O Lord* 130 3. *who may abide it? Lord thou knowest the thoughts of man* 94. 11. *that they are but vaine. O God why abhorrest thou my soul, and hidest thy face from me.*

In way of *Imploration. Up Lord, and help me O God; Oh* 3. 7. *let my heart bee sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.* 89. 48. *Lord, where are thy old loving* 109. 21. *mercies? Oh deliver me, for I am helplesse, and my heart is* 86. 4. *wounded within me. Comfort the soul of thy servant, for unto thee O Lord, doe I lift up*

my

my soul. Go not far from me O God. O knit my heart unto thee that I may fear thy name.	Psal. 71. 10. 86. 11.
Thou art my helper and redeemer, O Lord make no long tarrying. Oh be thou my helpe in trouble, for vain is the help of man. Oh guide me with thy counsell, and after that receive me to thy glory. My time is in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies. Oh withdraw not thy mercy from me, O Lord. Lead me O Lord in thy righteousnes because of mine enemies. O let my soul live, and it shall praise thee.	70. 6. 60. 11. 71. 23. 31. 17. 40. 14. 5, 8. 119. penult.
In way of Thanksgiving: Oh God, wonderfull art thou in thine holy places. O Lord, how glorious are thy workes! & thy thoughts are very deep. Oh God, who is like unto thee! The Lord, liveth, and blessed	68. 35. 92. 5. 71. 17. 18. 47.

be my ſtrong helper. Lord,
Pſa.63.4. thy loving kindneſſe is better
than life it ſelf. All thy works
145.10. praiſe thee, O Lord, and thy
Saints give thanks unto thee.
04.25. Oh how manifold are thy
workes! in wiſdome haſt thou
18.31. made them all. Who is God but
the Lord, and who hath any
20.5. ſtrength except our God? wee
will rejoyce in thy ſalvation,
and triumph in thy name O
107.8. Lord. O that men would praiſe
the Lord for his goodneſſe. Oh
31.21. how plentifull is thy goodneſſe,
which thou haſt laid up for
9.10. them that fear thee! Thou Lord
haſt never failed them that
16.12. ſeek thee. In thy preſence is the
fulneſſe of joy, and at thy right
hand there is pleaſure for e-
8.4. vermore. Lord, what is man
that thou art mindfull of him?
115.1. Not unto us Lord, not unto us,
but

but unto thy Name give the praise.

SECT. VIII.

Occasionall Ejaculations are such, as are moved upon the presence of some such object as carries a kind of relation or analogy to that holy thought which we have entertained. Of this nature I find that, which was practised in S. *Basils* time; that, upon the lighting of candles, the manner was to blesse God in these words, Praise be to God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy ghost; which that Father says was anciently used; but who was the Author of it he professeth to bee unknown

known: to the same purpose was the *Lucernarium*, which was a part of the evening office of old; For which, there may seem to be more colour of reason, than for the ordinary fashion of. apprecation, upon occasion of our sneesing; which is expected, and practised by many, out of civility: Old and reverend *Beza* was wont to move his hat with the rest of the company, but to say withall, *Gramercy Madame la Superstition*; Now, howsoever in this, or any other practice, which may seeme to carry with it a smacke of Superstition, our Devotion may be groundlesse and unseasonable, yet nothing hinders but that we may take just & holy hints of raising up

up our hearts to our God. As when we doe first look forth, and see the heavens over our heads, to thinke, *The heavens declare thy glory O God.* When we see the day breaking, or the Sun rising, *The day is thine, and the night is thine, thou hast prepared the light and the Sunne.* When the light shines in our faces, *Thou deckest thy self with light as with a garment*; or, *Light is sprung up for the righteous.* When we see our Garden imbellisht with flowers, *The earth is full of the goodnesse of the Lord.* When we see a rough sea, *The waves of the sea rage horribly, and are mighty; but the Lord that dwelleth on high, is mightier than they.* When we see the darkenesse of the night

Psal. 19. 1.
74. 17.
97. 11.
36. 9.
39. 5.
93. 5.

Psa.139.11 night, *The darknes is no darknes with thee.* When we rise
up from our bed, or our
139.2. seat, *Lord thou knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising; thou understāndest my thoughts afar off.* When we wash our
51.7. hands, *Wash thou me, O Lord, and I shall be whiter than snow.* When we are walking
17.5. forth, *O hold thou up my goings in thy paths, that my foot-steps slip not.* When we hear
90.12. ℣ a passing-bell, *Oh teach me to number my dayes, that I may*
39.5. *apply my heart to wisdome:* or, *Lord, let me know my end, and the number of my dayes.*

Thus may wee dart out our holy desires to God, upon all occasions; Wherein, heed must be taken that our Ejaculations be not, on the one side, so rare, that our hearts

hearts grow to be hard and ſtrange to God, but that they may be held on in continuall acknowledgement of him, and acquaintance with him; and, on the other ſide, that they be not ſo overfrequent in their perpetual reiteration, as that they grow to be (like that of the Romiſh votaries) faſhionable; which if great care bee not taken, will fall out, to the utter fruſtrating of our Devotion. Shortly, let the meaſure of theſe devout glances be, the preſerving our hearts in a conſtant tendernes, & godly diſpoſition; which ſhall be further actuated upon all opportunities, by the exerciſes of our more enlarged, and fixed Devotion: Whereof there is the

the same variety that there is in Gods services, about which it is conversant.

There are three maine businesses wherein God accounts his service, here below, to consist; The first is, our address to the throne of Grace, and the pouring out of our souls before him in our prayers: The second is, the reading and hearing his most holy Word; The third is, the receit of his blessed Sacraments; In all which there is place and use for a fetled Devotion.

Sect. IX.

TO begin with the first work of our actual, and enlarged Devotion: Some thing

things are pre-required of us, to make us capable of the comfortable performance of so holy and heavenly a duty; namely, that the heart be cleane first, and then that it be cleare: clean from the defilement of any knowne sin; cleare from all intanglements and distractions: What doe wee in our prayers, but converse with the Almighty? and either carry our soules up to him, or bring him down to us; now, it is no hoping, that we can entertaine God in an impure heart: Even wee men loath a nasty and sluttish lodging; how much more will the holy God abhorre an habitation spiritually filthy? I find that even the *unclean spirit* made that a mo-

a motive of his repoſſeſſion,
Luk. 11.25 that he found *the houſe ſwept and garniſhed*: Satans cleanlineſſe is pollution; and his garniſhment, diſorder and wickedneſſe; without this he findes no welcome; Each ſpirit looks for an entertainment anſwerable to his nature; How much more will that God of ſpirits, who is purity it ſelfe, look to be harboured in a cleanly room? Wiſd. 1.4. *Into a malicious ſoul wiſdome ſhall not enter, nor dwell in the body that is ſubject unto ſin.* What friend would be pleaſed that wee ſhould lodge him in a *Lazar-houſe*? or who would abide to have a Toad lie in his boſome? Surely, it is not in the verge of created nature to yeeld any thing that can be ſo noi-

ſome

ſome and odious to the ſenſe of man, as ſin is to that abſolute, and eſſentiall Goodneſſe: His pure eyes cannot indure the ſight of ſin; neither can he indure that the ſinner ſhould come within the ſight of him; *Away from me, yee wicked*, is his charge, both here, and hereafter. It is the privilege and happineſſe of the pure in heart, that they ſhall ſee God; ſee him both in the end, and in the way; enjoying the viſion of him, both in grace, and in glory: this is no object for impure eys: Deſcend into thy ſelf therefore, and ranſack thy heart, who ever wouldſt be a true Client of Devotion; ſearch all the cloſe windings of it, with the torches of the law of

of God; and if there be any iniquity found lurking in the secret corners therof, drag it out and abandon it; and when thou hast done, that thy fingers may retaine no pollution, say with the holy Psalmist; *I will wash my hands in innocence, so will I goe to thine Altar.* Presume not to approach the Altar of God, there to offer the Sacrifice of thy Devotion, with uncleane hands: Else thine offering shall be so far from winning an acceptance for thee, from the hands of God; as that thou shalt make thine offering abominable. And if a beast touch the Mount, it shall dye.

Psa. 26.6.

SECT.

SECT. X.

AS the ſoul muſt be clean from ſin, ſo it muſt bee clear and free from diſtractions. The intent of our Devotion is to welcome God to our hearts; now where ſhall we entertain him, if the rooms be full thronged with cares, and turbulent paſſions? The Spirit of God will not endure to be crowded up together with the world in our ſtrait lodgings; An holy vacuity muſt make way for him in our boſoms. The divine patterne of Devotion, in whom the Godhead dwelt bodily, retires into the Mount to pray; he that carried heaven with him,

him, would even thus leave the world below him. Alas, how can we hope to mount up to heaven in our thoughts, if wee have the clogs of earthly cares hanging at our heels: Yea, not only must there bee a shutting out of all distractive cares, and passions, which are professed enemies to our quiet conversing with God in our Devotion, but there must be also a denudation of the minde from all those images of our phantasie (how pleasing soever) that may carry our thoughts aside from those better objects: We are like to foolish children, who when they should be stedfastly looking on their books, are apt to gaze after every butter-fly, that

that passeth by them; here must be therefore a carefull intention of our thoughts, a restraint from all vaine, and idle rovings, and an holding our selves close to our divine taske: Whiles *Martha* is troubled about many things, her devouter sister, having chosen the better part, plyes the one thing necessary, which shall never be taken from her; and whiles *Martha* would feast Christ with bodily fare, she is feasted of Christ with heavenly delicacies.

SECT. XI.

After the heart is thus cleansed and thus cleared, it must bee in the next place

place decked with true humility, the cheapest, yet best ornament of the soul. If the wise man tel us, *that pride is* Eccl. 10. *the beginning of sin*; surely, all gracious dispositions must begin in humility. The foundation of all high and stately buildings must be laid low: They are the lowly valleys that soak in the showres of heaven, which the steep hils shelve off, and prove dry and fruitlesse. *To* Esa. 66. 2. *that man will I look* (saith God) *that is poore, and of a contrite spirit, and tremlleth at my word*: Hence it is, that the more eminent any man is in grace, the more he is dejected in the sight of God; Gen. 18. 27 The father of the faithfull comes to God under the stile of *dust, and ashes*: David under

under the ſtile of *a worm and no man*; *Agur* the ſon of *Jakeh*, under the title of *more brutiſh than any man, and one that hath not the underſtanding of a man*; John Baptiſt, *as not worthy to carry the ſhooes of Chriſt after him*; Paul, *as the leaſt of Saints, and chiefe of ſinners*: On the contrary, the more vile any man is in his owne eyes, and the more dejected in the ſight of God, the higher he is exalted in Gods favour: Like as the Conduict-water, by how much lower it fals, the higher it riſeth. Wherefore we would appeare before God, in our ſolemn devotions, we muſt ſee that we empty our ſelves of all proud conceits, and find our hearts fully convinced of

Pro. 30. 2.

Mar. 3. 11.

Epheſ. 3. 8.

our own vilenesse, yea nothingnes in his sight. Down, down with all our high thoughts; fall wee low before our great and holy God; not to the earth only, but to the very brim of hell, in the Conscience of our owne guiltinesse; for though the miserable wretchednesse of our nature may bee a sufficient cause of our humiliation, yet the consideration of our detestable sinfulnesse is that which will depresse us lowest in the sight of God.

SECT. XII.

IT is fit the exercise of our Devotion should begin in an humble confession of our unworthinesse. Now for

for the effectual furtherance of this our self-dejection, it will be requisite to bend our eyes upon a threefold object; To look inward into our selves, upward to heaven, downwards to hell. First, to turne our eyes into our bosomes, and to take a view (not without a secret self-loathing) of that world of corruption that hath lien hidden there; & therupon to accuse, arraign, and condemn our selves before that awful Tribunall of the Judge of heaven and earth; both of that originall pollution, which we have drawn from the tainted loins of our first parents; and those innumerable actuall wickednesses derived there-from; which have stained our persons

and lives. How can we bee but throughly humbled, to see our souls utterly over-spread with the odious and abominable leprosie of sin: We find that *Uzziah* bore up stoutly a while, against the Priests of the Lord, in the maintenance of his sacrilegious presumption, but when he saw himself turn'd *Lazar*, on the suddain, he is confounded in himselfe, and in a depth of shame hastens away from the presence of God to a sad, and penitentiall retirednes. We should need no other arguments to loath our selves, than the sight of our own faces, so miserably deformed with the nasty and hatefull scurfe of our iniquity: Neither only must we be content to

shame,

ſhame, and grieve our eyes with the foule nature and condition of our ſins, but we muſt repreſent them to our ſelves in all the circumſtances that may aggravate their nainouſneſſe. Alas, Lord, any one ſin is able to damne a ſoul; I have committed many, yea numberleſſe: they have not poſſeſſed me ſingle, but, as that evill ſpirit ſaid, their name is *Legion*: neither have I committed theſe ſins once, but often; Thine Angels (that were) ſinned but once, and are damned for ever; I have frequently reiterated the ſame offences, where (then were it not for thy mercy) ſhall I appear? neither have I only done them in the time of my ignorance, but ſince I received

sufficient illumination from thee; It is not in the darke that I have stumbled, and faln, but in the midst of the clear light and sun-shine of thy Gospel, and in the very face of thee my God; neither have these been the slips of my weakness, but the bold miscarriages of my presumption; neither have I offended out of inconsideration, and inadvertency, but after and against the checks of a remurmuring conscience; after so many gracious warnings, and fatherly admonitions, after so many fearfull examples of thy judgements, after so infinite obligations of thy favours.

And thus having look't inward into our selves, and taken an impartiall view of

our

our own vilenesse, it will be requisite to cast our eyes upward unto heaven, and there to see against whom we have offended; even against an infinite Majesty, & power, an infinite mercy, an infinite justice; That power and Majesty which hath spread out the heavens as a Curtain, and hath laid the foundations of the earth so sure that it cannot be moved; who hath shut up the sea with bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shalt thou stay thy proud waves; who doth whatsoever he will in heaven and in earth; who commandeth the Devils to their chains, able therfore to take infinite vengeance on sin- Job 38.

ners. That mercy of God the Father, who gave his own Son out of his bosome for our redemption; That mercy of God the Son, who, thinking it no robbery to be equall unto God, for our sakes made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient to the death, even the accursed death of the Crosse; That mercy of God the holy Ghost, who hath made that Christ mine, and hath sealed to my soule the benefit of that blessed Redemption; Lastly, that justice of God, which as it is infinitely displeased with every sin, so will be sure to take infinite ven-

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8, &c.

vengeance on every impenitent sinner.

And from hence it will be fit and seasonable for the devout soul, to look downward into that horrible pit of eternall confusion; and there to see the dreadful, unspeakable, unimaginable torments of the damned; to represent unto it selfe the terrors of those everlasting burnings; the fire and brimstone of that infernall Tophet; the mercilesse and unwearible tyranny of those hellish executioners; the shrieks, and howlings, and gnashings of the tormented; the unpitiable, interminable, unmitigable tortures of those ever-dying, and yet never-dying souls. By all which, we shall justly af-

fright our selves into a deep sense of the dangerous and wofull condition wherein we lie in the state of nature and impenitence, and shal be driven with an holy eagernesse to seek for Christ, the Son of the ever-living God, our blessed Mediator; in and by whom only, we can look for the remission of all these our sins, a reconcilement with this most powerfull, mercifull, just God, and a deliverance of our soules from the hand of the nethermost hell.

Sect. XIII.

IT shall not now need, or boot to bid the soul which is truely apprehensive of all these, to sue importunately to

to the Lord of life for a free-dome, and refcue from theſe infinite paines of eternall death, to which our ſinnes have forfeited it; and for a preſent happy recovery of that favour, which is better than life. Have we heard, or can wee imagine ſome hainous Malefactor, that hath received the ſentence of death, and is now bound hand, and foot, ready to be caſt into a Den of Lions, or a burning furnace, with what ſtrong cries, and paſſionate obſecrations he plies the Judge for mercy? wee may then conceive ſome little image of the vehement ſute, and ſtrong cries of a ſoul truly ſenſible of the danger of Gods wrath deſerved by his ſin, and the

dread-

dreadful consequents of deserved imminent damnation; Although what proportion is there betwixt a weak creature, and the Almighty; betwixt a moment, and eternity?

Hereupon therefore followes a vehement longing (uncapable of a denial) after Christ; and fervent aspirations to that Saviour, by whom only we receive a full and gracious deliverance from death and hell; and a full pardon and remission of all our sins; and if this come not the sooner, strong knockings at the gates of heaven, even so loud that the Father of mercies cannot but hear & open: Never did any contrite soul beg of God, that was not prevented

ted by his mercy; much more doth he condescend when he is strongly intreated; our very intreaties are from him, hee puts into us those desires which he graciously answers: Now therfore doth the devout soul see the God of all comfort to bow the heavens, and come down with healing in his wings; and heare him speak peace unto the heart thus throughly humbled; Fear not, thou shalt not die but live. Be of good cheare, thy sins are forgiven thee: Here therefore comes in that divine grace of Faith, effectually apprehending Christ the Saviour, and his infinite satisfaction and merits; comfortably applying all the sweet promises of the

the Gospel; clinging close to that all-sufficient Redeemer; and in his most perfect obedience emboldning it selfe, to challenge a freedome of accesse to God, and confidence of appearance before the Tribunal of heaven; and now the soule clad with Christs righteousnesse, dares look God in the face, and can both challenge and triumph over all the powers of darknesse: For, *being* Rom. 5.1. *justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Sect. XIV.

BY how much deeper the sense of our misery and danger is, so much more welcome and joyfull is the appre-

apprehenſion of our deliverance; and ſo much more thankfull is our acknowledgement of that unſpeakable mercy: The ſoule therefore that is truly ſenſible of this wonderfull goodneſſe of it's God; as it feels a marvellous joy in it ſelf, ſo it cannot but break forth into cheerfull and holy (though ſecret) gratulations: *The Lord is full of compaſſion, and mercy, long ſuffering, and of great goodnes; he keepeth not his anger for ever; he hath not dealt with me after my ſins, nor rewarded me after mine iniquities. what ſhal I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will thank thee, for thou haſt heard me, & haſt*

Pſ. 103, 8.

Pſ. 116. 12, 13.

Pſ. 119. 18, 21, &c.

haſt not given me over to death, but art become my ſalvation. O ſpeak good of the Lord all ye works of his; Praiſe thou the Lord O my ſoul.

SECT. XV.

THE more feelingly the ſoul apprehends, and the more thankfully it digeſts the favours of God in its pardon, and deliverance; the more freely doth the God of mercy impart himſelf to it; and the more God imparts himſelf to it, the more it loves him, and the more heavenly acquaintance and entireneſſe grows betwixt God & it; and now that love which was but a ſpark at firſt grows into a flame; and wholly takes up the ſoul. This fire of heavenly love in the devout ſoul, is, and

and must be heightned more and more, by the addition of the holy incentives of divine thoughts, concerning the means of our freedome and deliverance. And here, offers it self to us that bottomlesse abysse of mercy in our Redemption, wrought by the eternall Son of God, Jesus Christ the just, by whose stripeswe are healed; by whose bloud we are ransomed; where none will befit us but admiring and adoring notions. We shall not disparage you, O ye blessed Angels, and Arch-angels of Heaven, if we shall say, ye are not able to look into the bottome of this divine love, wherwith God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

ver beleeveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: None, oh none can comprehend this mercy, but he that wrought it. Lord what a transcendent, what an infinite love is this? what an object was this for thee to love? A world of sinners, Impotent, wretched creatures, that had dispighted thee, that had no motive for thy favour but deformity, misery, professed enmity? It had been mercy enough in thee, that thou didst not damn the world; but that thou shouldst love it, is more than mercy. It was thy great goodnesse to forbear the acts of just vengeance to the sinful world of man; but to give unto it tokens of thy love, is a favour beyond all ex-

expreſſion. The leaſt gift from thee had been more than the world could hope for; but that thou ſhouldſt not ſtick to give thine only begotten Son, the Son of thy love, the Son of thine eſſence, thy coequal, coeternal Son, who was more than ten thouſand worlds, to redeem this one forlorne world of ſinners, is love above all comprehenſion of men and Angels. What diminution had it been to thee and thine eſſentiall glory, O thou great God of heaven, that the ſouls that ſinned ſhould have dyed, and periſhed everlaſtingly? yet ſo infinite was thy loving mercy, that thou wouldeſt rather give thy onely Sonne out of thy boſome, than

than that there ſhould not be a redemption for beleevers.

Yet, O God, hadſt thou ſent down thy Son to this lower region of earth, upon ſuch termes, as that hee might have brought down heaven with him, that hee might have come in the port and Majeſty of a God, cloathed with celeſtiall glory, to have dazeled our eyes, and to have drawn all hearts unto him; this might have ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, to have ſorted with his divine magnificence; But thou wouldſt have him to appear in the wretched condition of our humanity: Yet, even thus, hadſt thou ſent him into the world, in the higheſt eſtate, and pomp of royalty, that

that earth could afford, that all the Kings and Monarchs of the world ſhould have been commanded to follow his train, and to glitter in his Court; and that the knees of all the Potentates of the earth ſhould have bowed to his Soveraign Majeſty, and their lips have kiſſed his duſt, this might have carried ſome kind of appearance of a ſtate next to divine greatneſſe; but thou wouldſt have him come in the deſpiſed form of a ſervant: And thou, O bleſſed Jeſu, waſt accordingly willing for our ſakes, to ſubmit thy ſelf to nakedneſſe, hunger, thirſt, wearineſſe, temptation, contempt, betraying, agonies, ſcorn, buffeting, ſcourgings, diſtention, crucifixion, death: Oh

love

love above measure, without example, beyond admiration! Greater love (thou saiest) hath no man, than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; But oh, what is it then, that thou who wert God and man, shouldst lay down thy life, (more precious than many worlds) for thine enemies! Yet, had it been but the laying down of a life, in a fair and gentle way, there might have been some mitigation of the sorrow of a dissolution; there is not more difference betwixt life and death, than there may be betwixt some one kind of death and another; Thine, O dear Saviour, was the painfull, shamefull, cursed death of the crosse; wherein yet, all

all that man could do unto thee was nothing to that inward torment, which, in our stead, thou enduredst from thy fathers wrath; when in the bitterness of thine anguished soul, thou cryedst out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Even thus, thus wast thou content to be forsaken, that wee wretched sinners might bee received to mercy; O love stronger than death which thou vanquishedst! more high, than that hell is deep, from which thou hast rescued us!

SECT. XVI.

THe sense of this infinite love of God cannot chuse but ravish the soul,

soul, and cause it to goe out of it self, into that Saviour who hath wrought so mercifully for it; so as it may be nothing in it self, but what it hath, or is, may be Christ. By the sweet powers therefore of Faith and Love the soul finds it self united unto Christ, feelingly, effectually, indivisibly: so as that it is not to be distinguished betwixt the acts of both:

Phil. 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ*, saith the blessed Apostle; and

Gal. 2. 20. elsewhere, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which now I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Cant. 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his*, saith the Spouse of Christ in her Bridall Song. O blessed

ſed union, next to the hypoſtaticall, whereby the humane nature of the Son of God is taken into the participation of the eternall Godhead.

SECT. XVII.

OUt of the ſenſe of this happy union ariſeth an unſpeakable complacency and delight of the ſoul in that God and Saviour, who is thus inſeparably ours, and by whoſe union we are bleſſed; and an high appreciation of him above all the world; and a contemptuous under-valuation of all earthly things, in compariſon of him; And this is no other than an heavenly reflection of that ſweet con-

tentment, which the God of mercies takes in the faithful soul; *Thou hast ravisht my heart, my sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravisht my heart with one of thine eyes. Thou art beautifull, O my Love, as* Tirzah, *comely as* Jerusalem; *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me. How fair is thy love, my sister, my Spouse? How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments better than all spices.* And the soul answers him again in the same language of spirituall dearnesse; *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is as strong as death:* And as in an ecstaticall qualm of passionate

Cant. 4. 9. 6. 4, 5.

Cant. 5. 10. 8. 6.

sionate affection; *Stay me with flaggons, and comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love.* 2. 5.

SECT. XVIII.

UPon this gracious complacency will follow an absolute self-resignation, or giving up our selves to the hands of that good God, whose we are, and who is ours; and an humble contentednesse with his good pleasure in all things; looking up on God with the same face, whether he smile upon us in his favours, or chastise us with his loving corrections; If he speak good unto us, *Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word*; If evill, *It is the*

Lord, let him doe what soever he will: Here is therefore a cheerfull acquiescence in God; and an hearty reliance, and casting our selves upon the mercy of so bountifull a God; who having given us his Son, can in and with him deny us nothing.

Sect. XIX.

UPon this subacted disposition of heart will follow a familiar (yet awfull) compellation of God; and an emptying of our souls before him in all our necessities. For that God, who is infinitely mercifull, yet will not have his favours otherwise conveighed to us than by our supplications. The style of his deare ones is, his people

people that prayeth, and his owne ſtile is, the God that heareth prayers: To him therefore doth the devout heart pour out all his requeſts with all true humility, with all fervour of ſpirit, as knowing, that God will hear neither proud prayers, nor heartleſſe: wherein his holy deſires are regulated by a juſt method; Firſt, ſuing for ſpirituall favours, as moſt worthy; then for temporall, as the appendances of better; and in both, aiming at the glory of our good God, more than our own advantage: And in the order of ſpirituall things, firſt and moſt for thoſe that are moſt neceſſary, and eſſentiall for our ſouls health, than for ſecondary graces, that con-

cern the prosperity & comfort of our spirituall life: Absolutely craving those graces that accompany salvation, all others, conditionally, and with reference to the good pleasure of the munificent giver; Wherin, heed must be taken, that our thoughts be not so much taken up with our expressions, as with our desires; and that we doe not suffer our selves to languish into an unfeeling length, and repetition of our sutes: Even the hands of a *Moses*, may in time grow heavy; so therefore must we husband our spirituall strength, that our devotion may not flagge with over-tiring, but may bee most vigorous at the last. And as we must enter into our

our prayers, not without preparatory elevations, so must we be carefull to take a meet leave of God, at their shutting up: following our supplications, with the pause of a faithfull, and most lowly adoration; and as it were sending up our hearts into heaven, to see how our prayers are taken; and raising them to a joyful expectation of a gracious and successefull answer from the father of mercies.

SECT. XX.

UPon the comfortable feeling of a gracious condescent, follows an happy fruition of God in all his favours; so as we have not them so much, as God in them; which advanceth

their worth a thousand fold, and as it were brings down heaven unto us; whereas, therefore, the sensuall man rests only in the meer use of any blessing, as health, peace, prosperity, knowledge, and reacheth no higher; the devoute soul, in, and through all these, sees, and feels a God that sanctifies them to him, and enjoyes therein his favour, that is better than life. Even we men are wont, out of our good nature, to esteem a benefit, not so much for its owne worth, as for the love, and respect of the giver: Small legacies for this cause, finde deare acceptation; How much more is it so betwixt God and the devout soul? It is the sweet apprehension

of

of this love that makes all his gifts, blessings. Doe we not see some vaine churle, though cryed down by the multitude, herein secretly applauding himself that he hath bags at home? how much more shall the godly man find comfort against all the crosses of the world, that hee is possessed of him that possesseth all things; even God All-sufficient; the pledges of whose infinite love he feels in all the whole course of Gods dealing with him?

SECT. XXI.

OUt of the true sense of this inward fruition of God, the devout soul breaks forth into cheerfull thanksgivings

givings to the God of all comfort, praising him for every evill that it is free from; for every good thing it enjoyeth: For, as it keeps a just Inventory of all Gods favours, so it often spreads them thankfully before him and layes them forth (so near as it may) in the full dimensions; that so, God may be no loser by him in any act of his beneficence. Here therefore every of Gods benefits must come into account; whether eternall or temporall, spirituall or bodily, outward or inward, publick or private, positive or privative, past or present, upon our selves or others. In all which, he shall humbly acknowledge both Gods free mercy, and his

his own shamefull unworthinesse; setting off the favours of his good God the more, with the foyle of his own confessed wretchednes, and unanswerablenesse to the least of his mercies.

Now as there is infinite variety of blessings from the liberall hand of the Almighty, so there is great difference in their degrees; For, wheras there are three subjects of all the good we are capable of; The Estate, Body, Soul; and each of these doe far surpasse other in value, (the soul being infinitely more worth than the body, and the body far more precious than the outward estate) so the blessings that appertain to them, in severall, differ in their true esti-

mation

mation accordingly. If either wee doe not highly magnifie Gods mercy for the least, or shall set as high a price upon the blessings that concerne our estate, as those that pertain to the body, or upon bodily favours, as upon those that belong to the soul, we shall shew our selves very unworthy, and unequall partakers of the Divine bounty. But it will savor too much of earth, if we be more affected with temporall blessings, than with spirituall and eternall. By how much nearer relation then, any favor hath to the Fountain of goodnesse, and by how much more it conduceth to the glory of God, and ours in him, so much higher

place

place should it possesse in our affection and gratitude. No marvell therefore if the Devout Heart bee raised above it self, and transported with heavenly raptures, when, with *Stephens* eyes, it beholds the Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of God, fixing it self upon the consideration of the infinite Merits of his Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, and finding it self swallowed up in the depth of that Divine Love, from whence all mercies flow into the soule; so as that it runs over with passionate thankfulnes, and is therefore deeply affected with all other his mercies, because they are derived from that boundlesse Ocean of

of Divine goodneſſe. Unſpeakable is the advantage that the ſoule raiſes to it ſelf by this continuall exerciſe of thankſgiving; for the gratefull acknowledgement of favours, is the way to more; even amongſt men (whoſe hands are ſhort and ſtrait) this is the meanes to pull on further beneficence; how much more from the God of all Conſolation, whoſe largeſt bounty diminiſheth nothing of his ſtore? And herein the devout Soul enters into its heavenly Task; beginning upon earth thoſe Hallelujahs, which it ſhall perfect above in the bleſſed Chore of Saints and Angels, ever praiſing God, and ſaying, *Bleſſing, and Glory, and Wiſdome, and Thankſgiving,*

giving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

SECT. XXII.

NOne of all the services of God can bee acceptably, no not unsinfully performed without due devotion; as therefore in our prayers and thanksgivings, so in the other exercises of Divine Worship, (especially, in the reading and hearing of Gods Word, and in our receipt of the blessed Sacrament) it is so necessary, that without it, we offer to God a meer carcasse of religious duty, and profane that sacred name we would pretend to honour. First then, we must come to Gods Book,

Book, not without an holy Reverence, as duly considering both what and whose it is; Even no other, than the Word of the ever-living God, by which wee shall once be judged. Great reason have wee therefore, to make a difference betwixt it, and the writings of the Holiest men, even no lesse than betwixt the Authors of both: God is true, yea, truth it self; and that which *David* said in his haste, S. *Paul* sayes in full deliberation, *Every man is a lier.* Before we put our hand to this Sacred Volume, it will be requisite to elevate our hearts to that God whose it is, for both his leave and his blessing: *Open mine eyes*, saith the sweet singer of Israel, *that I may behold*

Psal. 116
Rom. 3. 4

Psal. 119. 8.

hold the wondrous things of thy Law. Lo, *Davids* eyes were open before to other objects; but when he comes to *Gods* Book, he can see nothing without a new act of apertion: Letters he might see, but wonders hee could not see, till *God* did unclose his eyes, and enlighten them. It is not therfore for us, presumptuously to break in upon *God*, and to think by our naturall abilities to wrest open the precious Caskets of the Almighty; and to fetch out all his hidden treasure thence, at pleasure; but we must come tremblingly before him, and in all humility crave his gracious admission. I confesse I finde some kinde of envy in my self, when I read of those scrupulous

pulous observances of high respects given by the Jews to the Book of Gods Law: and when I read of a Romish Saint, that never read the Scripture but upon his knees, and compare it with the careleſſe neglect whereof I can accuſe my ſelf, and perhaps ſome others: Not that wee ſhould reſt in the formality of outward Ceremonies of reverence, wherein it were more eaſie to be ſuperſtitious than devout; but that our outward deportment may teſtifie, and anſwer the awfull diſpoſition of our hearts: whereto we ſhall not need to be excited, if wee be throughly perſwaded of the Divine Originall, and authority of that Sacred Word. It was

Carolus Borromæus.

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motive enough to the *Ephesians* zealously to plead for, and religiously to adore the Image of their *Diana*, that it was *the Image that fell down from Jupiter*. Acts 19.35. Beleeve we, and know, that the Scripture is inspired by God; and we can entertain it with no other than an awfull addresse, and we cannot be Christians if we do not so beleeve.

Every Clause therefore of that God-inspired Volume, must be, as reverently received by us, so seriously weighed, and carefully laid up; as knowing, that there is no tittle therein without his use. What we read, we must labour to understand; what wee cannot understand, we must admire silently, and modestly enquire of

of. There are plain Truths, and there are deep myſteries. The bounty of God hath left this Well of Living-water open for all; what runs over is for all commers; but every one hath not wherewith to draw. There is no Chriſtian that may not enjoy Gods Book, but every Chriſtian may not interpret it; thoſe ſhallow Fords that are in it, may be waded by every Paſſenger, but there are deeps wherein he that cannot ſwim, may drown. *How can I without a Guide*, ſaid that Ethopian Eunuch: Wherfore ſerves the tongue of the Learned, but to direct the Ignorant? Their modeſty is of no leſſe uſe than the others skill. It is

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a woefull condition of a Church when no man will be ignorant.

What service can our eyes doe us in the wayes of God without our thoughts? our diligent and frequent reading, therefore, must be attended with our holy meditation: we feed on what we read, but we digest only what we meditate of. What is in our Bible is Gods; but that which is in our hearts, is our own: By all which our care must be, not so much to become wiser, as to become better, labouring still to reduce all things to godly practice.

Finally, as we enter into this task with the lifting up of our hearts for a blessing, so we shut it up in the ejaculations

lations of our thanksgiving to that God, who hath blessed us with the free use of his Word.

SECT. XXIII.

OUr eye is our best guide to God our Creator, but our ear is it that leads us to God our Redeemer. *How shall they beleeve except they heare?* Which that we may effectually doe, our devotion suggests unto us some duties before the act, some in the act, some after the act.

It is the Apostles charge, that we should be swift to hear, but heed must be taken, that we make not more haste than good speed: we may not be so forward as not to *look to our foot* when we

Eccles. 5.1.

we go to the house of God, lest if we be too ready to heare, we offer *the sacrifice of Fooles*. What are the feet of the soul, but our affections? If these be not set right, we may easily stumble, and wrench at Gods threshold. Rash actions can never hope to prosper; as therefore to every great Work, so to this, there is a due preparation required; and this must be done by meditation first, then by prayer. Our meditation first, sequesters the heart from the world, and shakes off those distractive thoughts, which may carry us away from these better things: for what room is there for God, where the World hath taken up the lodging?

Wee cannot serve God and Mammon. Then secondly, it seizes upon the heart for God, fixing our thoughts upon the great businesse we goe about; recalling the greatnesse of that Majesty into whose presence we enter, and the maine importance of the service we are undertaking; and examining our intentions wherewith we addresse our selves to the work intended; I am now going to Gods House; Wherefore doe I goe thither? Is it to see, or to be seen? Is it to satisfie my owne curiosity in hearing what the Preacher will say? Is it to satisfie the law, that requires my presence? Is it to please others eyes, or to avoid their censures? Is it

it for fashion? Is it for recreation? Or is it with a sincere desire to do my soul good, in gaining more knowledge, in quickning my affections? Is it in a desire to approve my selfe to my God, in the conscience of my humble obedience to his command, and my holy attendance upon his Ordinance? And where we find our ends amisse, chiding and rectifying our obliquities; where just and right, prosecuting them towards a further perfection.

Which that it may bee done, our meditation must be seconded by our prayers. It is an unholy rudenesse to presse into the presence of that God whom wee have not invoked: Our prayer

must bee, that God would yet more prepare us for the work, and sanctifie us to it, and blesse us in it; that he would remove our sinnes, that he would send down his Spirit into our hearts, which may inable us to this great service; that he would blesse the Preacher in the delivery of his sacred message, that he would be pleased to direct his Messengers tongue to the meeting with our necessities; that hee would free our hearts from all prejudices and distractions; that he would keep off all temptations, which might hinder the good entertainment, and successe of his blessed Word: Finally, that hee would make us truely teachable, and his ordinance

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the power of God to our salvation.

In the act of hearing, Devotion cals us to *Reverence, Attention, Application. Reverence* to that great God, who speaks to us, by the mouth of a weak man; for, in what is spoken from Gods Chair, agreeable to the Scriptures, the sound is mans, the substance of the message is Gods; Even an *Eglon*, when he hears of a message from God, riseth out of his seat. It was not St. *Pauls* condition only, but of all his faithfull servants, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation; *They are Ambassadors for Christ; as if God did beseech us by them, they pray us in Christs stead to be reconci-*

Judg. 3. 20.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

led to God : The Ambassie is not the bearers, but the Kings; and if we do not acknowledge the great King of heaven in the voice of the Gospel, we cannot but incur a contempt.

When therefore wee see Gods messenger in his pulpit, our eye lookes at him as if it said with *Cornelius*

Acts 10. 33. *We are all here present before God to heare all things that are commanded thee of God:* whence cannot but follow together with an awful disposition of mind, a reverent deportment of the body which admits not a wild & roving eye, a drouzy head, a chatting tongue, a rude and indecent posture; but composes it self to such a site as may befit a pious soul in

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religious an imploiment. Neither do we come as authorized Judges to sit upon the Preacher, but as humble Disciples to sit at his feet.

SECT. XXIV.

REverence cannot but draw on Attention; We need not be bidden to hang on the lips of him whom we honour. It is the charge of the Spirit, *Let him that hath an ear hear*; Every one hath not an ear, and of those that have an ear, every one heareth not; The soul hath an ear as well as the body; if both these eares doe not meet together in one act, there is no hearing: Common experience tels us that when the minde is other-

wise taken up, we doe no more hear what a man says, than if we had been deaf, or he silent. Hence is that first request of *Abigail* to *David*; 1 Sam. 25. 24. *Let thine handmaid speak to thine eares, and hear the words of thine handmaid*; and *Job* so importunately urgeth his Job 13. 17. friends, *Hear diligently my speech and my declaration with your ears.* The outward ear may be open, and the inward shut; if way be not made through both, we are deaf to spirituall things. Psa. 40. 6. *Mine ear hast thou bored*, or *digged*, saith the Psalmist; the vulgar reads it, *my eares hast thou perfitted*: Surely our ears are grown up with flesh; there is no passage for a perfit hearing of the voice of God, till hee have made

made it by a ſpirituall perforation.

And now that the ear is made capable of good counſel, it doth as gladly receive it; taking in every good leſſon, and longing for the next: Like unto the dry and chopped earth, which ſoaks in every ſilver drop, that fals from the clouds, and thirſteth for more; not ſuffering any of that precious liquor to fall beſide it.

SECT. XXV.

NEither doth the devout man care to ſatisfie his curioſity, as hearing only that hee might hear; but reducts all things to a ſaving uſe; bringing all hee

hears, home to his heart, by a self-reflecting application; like a practiser of the art of memory, referring every thing to its proper place; If it be matter of comfort, There is for my sick-bed, There is for my outward losses, There for my drooping under afflictions, There for the sense of my spiritual desertions; If matter of doctrine, There is for my settlement in such a truth, There for the conviction of such an error, There for my direction in such a practice; If matter of reproof, he doth not point at his neighbour, but deeply chargeth himself; This meets with my dead-heartedness and security, This with my worldly-mindedness, This with my

my self-love and flattery of mine owne estate, This with my uncharitable censoriousnesse, This with my foolish pride of heart, This with my hypocrisie, This with my neglect of Gods services, and my duty; Thus in all the variety of the holy passages of the Sermon, the devout minde is taken up with digesting what it hears; and working it self to a secret improvement of all the good counsell that is delivered, neither is ever more busie, than when it sits still at the feet of Christ. I cannot therefore approve the practice (which yet I see commonly received) of those, who think it no small argument of their Devotion, to spend their time of

hearing, in writing large notes from the mouth of the Preacher; which, however it may be an help for memory in the future, yet cannot (as I conceive) but be some prejudice to our present edification; neither can the braine get so much hereby, as the heart loseth. If it be said, that by this means, an opportunity is given for a full rumination of wholsome Doctrines afterwards: I yeeld it, but withall I must say that our afterthoughts can never doe the work so effectually, as when the lively voice sounds in our ears, and beats upon our heart; but herein I submit my opinion to better judgements.

SECT.

Sect. XXVI.

THe food that is received into the soul by the ear, is afterwards chewed in the mouth the roof by memory, concocted in the stomack by meditation, and dispersed into the parts by conference and practise; True Devotion findes the greatest part of the work behinde; It was a just answer that *John Gerson* reports, given by a Frenchman, who being askt by one of his neighbours if the Sermon were done; no saith he, it is said, but it is not done, neither will be, I fear, in hast. What are we the better if we hear and remember not? If we be such auditors as the

Serm. ad Eccles. cautelam.

the Jews were wont to call sieves, that retaine no moisture that is poured into them? What the better if we remember, but think not seriously of what we hear; or if we practice not carefully what we think of? Not that which we hear is our own, but that which we carry away: although all memories are not alike, one receives more easily, another retains longer; It is not for every one to hope to attain to that ability, that he can goe away with the whole fabrick of a Sermon, and readily recount it unto others; neither doth God require that of any man, which he hath not given him; Our desires and endeavours may not be wanting where

where our powers faile; It will bee enough for weak memories, if they can so lay up those wholsome counsells which they receive, as that they may fetch them forth when they have occasion to use them; & that what they want in the extent of memory, they supply in the care of their practice; Indeed that is it, wherein lies the life of all religious duties, and without which they are but idle formalities; that which the Philosopher said of all vertue, I must say of true godlinesse, that it consists in action; Our Saviour did not say, *Blessed are ye if you know these things*; But, *If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye doe them.* The end of our desire

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of the ſincere milk of the Goſpel, is, that we may *grow thereby* in the ſtature of all Grace, unto the *fulneſſe of God.*

1 Pet. 2. 2. Eph. 3. 9.

SECT. XXVII.

THe higheſt of all Gods ſervices are his Sacraments; which therefore require the moſt eminent acts of our Devotion. The Sacrament of initiation, which in the firſt planting of a Church is adminiſtred only to thoſe of riper age and underſtanding, cals for all poſſible reverence, and religious addreſſes of the receivers; wherein the Primitive times were punctually obſervant, both for ſubſtance, and ceremony; now, in

in a ſetled and perpetuated Church, in which the vertue of the Covenant deſcends from the parent to the child, there ſeems to be no uſe of our preparatory directions: Only, it is fit that our Devotion ſhould call our eyes back, to what we have done in our infancy, and whereto we are ever obliged; that our full age may carefully endeavour to make our word good, and may put us in minde of our ſinfull failings. That other Sacrament of our ſpirituall nouriſhment, which our Saviour (as his farewell) left us for a bleſſed memoriall of his death and paſſion, can never be celebrated with enough Devotion. Farre be it from us to come to this feaſt

feast of our God, in our common garments; the soul must be trimmed up, if we would be meet guests for the Almighty. The great Master of the feast will neither abide us to come naked, nor ill clad: Away therefore, first with the old beastly ragges of our wonted corruptions: Due examination comes in first, and throughly searches the soul, and finds out all the secret nastinesse, and defilements that it hides within it; and by the aid of true penitence, strips it of all those loathsome clouts, wherewith it was polluted; Sin may not bee cloathed upon with grace; *Joshuah's* filthy garments must bee pluckt off, ere hee can be capable of

Zach. 3.

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precious robes: Here may be no place for our ſinfull luſts, for our covetous deſires, for our naturall infidelity, for our malicious purpoſes, for any of our unhallowed thoughts; The ſoul clearly deveſted of theſe and all other known corruptions, muſt in the next place in ſtead thereof, be furniſhed with ſuch graces and holy predifpoſitions, as may fit it for ſo heavenly a work. Amongſt the graces requiſite, Faith juſtly challengeth the firſt place, as that which is both moſt eminent, and moſt neceſſarily preſuppoſed to the profitable receit of this Sacrament; for whereas the main end of this bleſſed banquet is the ſtrengthening of our faith,

faith, how ſhould that receive ſtrength, which hath not being? to deliver theſe ſacred viands to an unbeleever, is to put meat into the mouth of a dead man: Now therefore muſt the heart raiſe up it ſelfe to new acts of beleeving, and muſt lay faſter hold on Chriſt, and bring him cloſer to the ſoul; more ſtrongly applying to its ſelf, the infinite merits of his moſt perfect obedience, & of his bitter death and paſſion; and erecting it ſelf to a deſire and expectation of a more vigorous and lively apprehenſion of its omnipotent Redeemer. Neither can this faith be either dead, or ſolitary; but is ſtill really operative, and attended (as with other graces, ſo) eſpe-

especially with a serious repentance; whose wonderfull power is, to undoe our former sins, and to mold the heart and life to a better obedience: A grace so necessary, that the want of it (as in extream corruption of the stomack) turnes the wholsome food of the soul into poison; An impenitent man therefore comming to Gods Board, is so far from benefiting himself, as that he eates his owne judgement: Stand off from this holy table, all yee that have not made your peace with your God; or that harbour any knowne sinne in your bosome; not to eat is uncomfortable, but to eat in such a state is deadly; yet rest not in this plea, that ye cannot

not come becauſe yee are unreconciled; but (as yee love your ſouls) be reconciled that you may come.

Another Grace neceſſarily pre-required is charity to our brethren, and readineſſe to forgive; For this is a communion, as with Chriſt the head, ſo with all the members of his myſticall body: This is the true Love-feaſt of God our Saviour, wherein wee profeſſe our ſelves inſeparably united both to him and his; If there be more hearts than one at Gods Table, he will not own them; Theſe holy elements give us an Embleme of our ſelves: This bread is made up of many grains, incorporated into one maſſe; and this wine

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is the confluent juice of many clusters; neither doe we partake of severall loaves, or variety of liquors, but all eat of one bread, and drink of one cup. Here is then no place for rancour and malice; none for secret grudgings and heart-burnings; *Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against the, Leave there thy gift, and go thy way; first bee reconciled to thy brother, and them come and offer thy gift.* Mat. 5. 23.

Neither may we doe, as those two emulous Commanders of *Greece* did, who resolved to leave their spight behind them at Mount *Athos*, and to take it up again in their returne; here

here must bee an absolute, and free acquitting of all the back-reckonings of our unkindnesse, that we may receive the God of peace into a cleare bosome.

SECT. XXVIII.

BEsides these graces there are certaine holy predispositions so necessary that without them our soules can never hope to receive true comfort in this blessed Sacrament; whereof the first is an hungring and thirsting desire after these gracious means of our salvation: What good will our meat doe us without an appetite? Surely without it, there is no expectation of either

either reliſh, or digeſtion; as therefore thoſe that are invited to ſome great feaſt, care firſt to feed their hunger ere they feed their body; labouring by exerciſe to get a ſtomach, ere they employ it; ſo it concerns us to do here: and, as thoſe that are liſtleſſe, and weak ſtomached, are wont to whet their appetite with ſharp ſawces; ſo muſt wee by the tart applications of the law, quicken our deſires of our Saviour here exhibited.

Could wee but ſee our ſins, and our miſeries by ſin; Could wee ſee God frowning, and hell gaping wide to ſwallow us, wee ſhould not need to bee bidden to long for our deliverer; and every pledge of his favour

favour would be precious to us.

Upon the apprehenſion of our need of a Saviour and ſo happy a ſupply therof preſented unto us, muſt needs follow a renewed act of true thankfulnes of heart to our good God, that hath both given us his dear Son to work our redemption, & his bleſſed Sacrament to ſeal up unto us our redemption thus wrought and purchaſed; And with ſouls thus thankfully elevated unto God, we aproach with all reverence, to that heavenly Table, where God is both the Feaſt-maſter and the Feaſt. What intention of holy thoughts, what fervour of ſpirit, what depth of Devotion muſt we now find in our

our selves? Doubtlesse, out of heaven no object can be so worthy to take up our hearts. What a clear representation is here of the great work of our Redemption? How is my Saviour by all my senses here brought home to my soul? How is his passion lively acted before mine eyes? For lo, my bodily eye doth not more truely see bread and wine, than the eye of my faith sees the body and bloud of my dear Redeemer; Thus was his sacred body torn and broken; Thus was his precious bloud poured out for me; My sins (wretched man that I am) helped thus to crucifie my Saviour; and for the discharge of my sins would he be thus crucified:

Neither did hee only give himselfe for me, upon the Crosse, but lo, he both offers and gives himself to me in this his blessed institution; what had his generall gift been without this application? Now my hand doth not more sensibly take, nor my mouth more really eate this bread, than my soule doth spiritually receive, and feed on the bread of life; O Saviour, thou art the living bread that came dome from heaven; Thy flesh is meat indeed, and thy bloud is drink indeed: Oh that I may so eate of this bread, that I may live for ever. He that commeth to thee, shall never hunger; he that beleeveth in thee, shall never thirst: Oh that I could now so

so hunger, and so thirst for thee, that my soul could be for ever satisfied with thee; Thy people of old, were fed with Manna in the wildernesse, yet they dyed; that food of Angels could not keep them from perishing; but oh, for the hidden Manna, which giveth life to the world, even thy blessed self, give me ever of this bread, and my soule shall not dye but live: Oh the precious juice of the fruit of the Vine, wherewith thou refreshest my soul! Is this the bloud of the grape? Is it not rather thy bloud of the New Testament, that is poured out for me? Thou speakest, O Saviour, of new wine that thou wouldest drink with

thy Disciples, in thy Fathers Kindome, can there be any more precious and pleasant, than this, wherewith thou cheerest the beleeving soule? our palate is now dull and earthly, which shall then bee exquisite and celestiall; but surely, no liquor can be of equall price or soveraignty with thy bloud; Oh how unsavory are all earthly delicacies to this heavenly draught! O God, let not the sweet taste of this spirituall Nectar ever goe out of the mouth of my soul; Let the cõfortable warmth of this blessed Cordiall ever work upon my soul, even till, and in, the last moment of my dissolution. Dost thou bid me, O Saviour, do this

this in remembrance of thee? Oh, how can I forget thee? How can I enough celebrate thee for this thy unspeakable mercy? Can I see thee thus crucified before my eyes, and for my sake thus crucified, and not remember thee? Can I find my sins accessary to this thy death, and thy death meritoriously expiating all these my grievous sins, and not remember thee? Can I hear thee freely offering thy selfe to me, and feele thee graciously conveighing thy self into my soul, and not remember thee? I doe remember thee O Saviour; but oh that I could yet more effectually remember thee; with all the passionate affections of

a soul sick of thy love; with all zealous desires to glorifie thee, with all fervent longings after thee, and thy salvation; I remember thee in thy sufferings, Oh doe thou remember me in thy glory.

Sect. XXIX.

HAving thus busied it self with holy thoughts in the time of the celebration, the devout soul breaks not off in an abrupt unmannerlinesse, without taking leave of the great master of this heavenly feast, but with a secret adoration, humbly blesseth God for so great a mercy, and heartily resolves and desires to walk worthy of the Lord Jesus, whom it hath

hath received, and to consecrate it selfe wholly to the service of him that hath so dearly bought it, and hath given it these pledges of its eternall union with him.

The Devout Soul hath thus supt in heaven, and returns home, yet the work is not thus done: after the elements are out of eye and use, there remains a digestion of this celestiall food, by holy meditation; and now it thinks, Oh what a blessing have I received to day! no lesse than my Lord Jesus, with all his merits; and in and with him, the assurance of the remission of all my sins, and everlasting salvation: How happy am I, if I be not wanting to God & my self? How unworthy

ſhall I be, if I doe not ſtrive to anſwer this love of my God and Saviour, in all hearty affection, and in all holy obedience?

And now after this heavenly repaſt, how do I feel my ſelf? what ſtrength, what advantage hath my faith gotten? how much am I nearer to heaven than before? how much faſter hold have I taken of my bleſſed Redeemer? how much more firm and ſenſible is my intereſt in him?

Neither are theſe thoughts, and this examination the work of the next inſtant onely, but they are ſuch, as muſt dwell upon the heart; and muſt often ſolicite our memory, and excite our practiſe, that by this means we

we may frequently renew the efficacy of this blessed *Sacrament*, and our souls may batten more and more, with this spirituall nourishment, and may be fed up to eternall life.

SECT. XXX.

THese are the generalities of our Devotion, which are of common use to all Christians; There are besides these certaine specialties of it, appliable to severall occasions, times, places, persons; For there are morning, and evening Devotions; Devotions proper to our board, to our closet, to our bed, to Gods day, to our

own; to health, to ſickneſſe, to ſeverall callings, to recreations; to the way, to the field, to the Church, to our home; to the ſtudent, to the ſouldier, to the Magiſtrate, to the Miniſter, to the husband, wife, child, ſervant; to our owne perſons, to our families; The ſeveralties whereof, as they are ſcarce finite for number, ſo are moſt fit to to be left to the judgement, and holy managing of every Chriſtian; neis it to be imagined, that any ſoul which is taught of God, and hath any acquaintance with heaven, can be to ſeek in the particular application of common rules to his own neceſſity or expedience.

The reſult of all is,

A devout man is he that ever ſees the inviſible, and ever trembleth before that God he ſees; that walks ever, here on earth, with the God of heaven; and ſtill adores that Majeſty with whom he converſes; That confers hourly with the God of ſpirits in his own language; yet ſo, as no familiarity can abate of his aw, nor fear abate ought of his love. To whom the gates of heaven are ever open; that he may go in at pleaſure to the throne of grace, & none of the Angelical ſpirits can offer to challenge him of too much boldneſs: Whoſe eyes are well acquainted with thoſe heavenly guardians, the preſence of whom hee doth as truly acknowledge,

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as if they were his ſenſible Companions. He is well known of the King of glory, for a daily ſutor in the Court of heaven, and none ſo welcome there, as he: He accounts all his time loſt that falls beſide his God; and can be no more weary of good thoughts, than of happineſſe.

His boſome is no harbour for any knowne evill; and it is a queſtion whether hee more abhorres ſin, or hell; His care, is to entertain God in a clear and free heart, and therefore he thruſts the world out of doors, and humbly beſeeches God to welcome himſelf to his owne: He is truly dejected, and vile in his owne eyes: Nothing but hell is lower than

than he; every of his ſlips are hainous, every treſpaſſe is aggravated to rebellion; The glory and favours of God heighten his humiliation; He hath lookt down to the bottomleſſe deep, and ſeen with horror what he deſerved to feel everlaſtingly; His cries have been as ſtrong, as his fears juſt; and he hath found mercy more ready to reſcue him, than he could be importunate: His hand could not be ſo ſoon put forth as his Saviours, for deliverance. The ſenſe of this mercy hath raiſed him to an unſpeakable joy, to a moſt fervent love of ſo dear a Redeemer; that love hath knit his heart to ſo meritorious a deliverer, and wrought a bleſſed

blessed union betwixt God and his soul. That union can no more be severed from an infinite delight, than that delight can bee severed from an humble, & cheerfull acquiescence in his munificent God; And now, as in an heavenly freedome, he pours out his soul into the bosome of the Almighty, in all faithfull sutes for himself and others; so, he enjoyes God in the blessings received, and returns all zealous prayses to the giver.

He comes reverently to the Oracles of God, and brings not his eye, but his heart with him; not carelessly negligent in seeking to know the revealed will of his Maker, nor too busily inqui-

inquisitive into his deep counsels; not too remisse in the letter, nor too peremptory in the sense: gladly comprehending what hee may, and admiring what he cannot comprehend. Doth God call for his ear? He goes awfully into the holy presence and so hears, as if he should now hear his last: Latching every word that drops from the Preachers lips, ere it fall to the ground, and laying it up carefully where hee may be sure to fetch it. Hee sits not to censure, but to learn, yet speculation and knowledge is the least drift of his labour; Nothing is his own but what he practiseth. Is he invited to Gods feast? he hates to come in a foul and slovenly dresse; but

but trims up his ſoul, ſo, as may be fit for an heavenly gueſt: Neither doth he leave his ſtomach at home cloyed with the world, but brings a ſharp appetite with him; and ſo feeds as if he meant to live for ever. All earthly Delicates are unſavory to him, in reſpect of that celeſtiall Manna: Shortly, he ſo eates and drinks, as one that ſees himſelf ſet at Table with God, and his Angels; and riſes and departs full of his Saviour; and in the ſtrength of that meal walks vigorouſly and cheerfully on towards his glory. Finally, as he well knows that he lives, and moves, and hath his being in God, ſo he refers his life, motions, and being wholly to God; ſo acting

ing all things, as if God did them by him, so using all things, as one that enjoyes God in them; and in the mean time so walking on earth, that he doth in a sort carry his heaven with him.

THE

THE FREE PRISONER:

OR,

The COMFORT of RESTRAINT.

Written
Some while since
in the Tower,

BY

I.H.B.N.

The Free Prisoner:

OR,

The Comfort of Restraint.

SECT. I.

SIR,

WHiles you pity my Affliction, take heed lest you aggravate it, and in your thoughts make it greater than it is in my own; It is true, I am under restraint; What is that to a man, that can be free in the Tower, and cannot but be a prisoner abroad? Such is my condition, and every Divine

vine Philoſophers with me. Were my walks much ſtraiter than they are, they cannot hold me in; It is a bold word to ſay, *I cannot, I will not be a priſoner:* It is my *ſoul* that is *I*: my fleſh is my partner, (if not my ſervant) not my ſelf: However my body may be immured, that agile ſpirit ſhall flie abroad, and viſit both earth & heaven at pleaſure. Who ſhall hinder it from mounting up (in an inſtant) to that ſupreme region of bliſſe, and from ſeeing that, by the eye of faith, which S. *Paul* ſaw in extaſie; and when it hath viewed that bleſſed *Hierarchy* of heaven, to glance down through the innumerable, and unmeaſurable globes of light (which move in

in the firmament, and below it) into this elementary world; and there to compaſs ſeas and lands, without ſhipwrack, in a trice, which a *Drake*, or *Cavendiſh* cannot doe, but with danger, and in ſome years navigation; And if my thoughts liſt to ſtay themſelves in the paſſage; with what variety can my ſoul be taken up of ſeverall objects; Here, turning in to the dark vaults, and dungeons of penall reſtraint, to viſit the diſconſolate priſoners, and to fetch from their greater miſery, a juſt mitigation of mine own; There, looking in to the houſes of vain jollity, and pitying that which the ſenſuall fools call happineſs; Here ſtepping in to the

Courts

Courts of great Princes, & in them observing the fawning compliances of some, the trecherous underworking of others; hollow friendships, faithless ingagements, faire faces, smooth tongues, rich suits, viewing all save their hearts, and censuring nothing that it sees not; There calling in at the low cottages of the poor, and out of their empty cupbord furnishing it self with thankfulnesse; Here so overlooking the Courts of Justice, as not willing to see rigour or partiality; There listning what they say in those meetings wch would passe for sacred, and wondring at what it hears. Thus can, and shall, and doth my nimble spirit bestirre it self

ſelfe in a reſtleſſe flight, making onely the Empyreall heaven, the bounds of its motion; not being more able to ſtand ſtill, than the heavens themſelves, whence it deſcended: Should the Iron enter into my ſoul, as it did into that good Patriarchs, yet it cannot fetter me: No more can my ſpirit be confined to one place, than my body can bee diffuſed to many. Perhaps therefore you are miſtaken in my condition; for what i sit I beſeech you that makes a priſoner? Is it an allotment to the ſame roome without change, without remove? What is that ſtill to a mind that is free?

And why is my body then more a priſoner than the

best mans soul; that, you know, is peremptorily assigned, for inhabitation to this house of clay till the day of dissolution: Why more than the stars of heaven, which have remained fixed in their first stations ever since they were first created? Why more than those great persons which keep up for state; or dames for beauty? Why more than those Anachorites whom wee have seen willingly coopt up for merit? How much more scope have we than they? Wee breath fresh aire, we see the same heavens with the freest travellers.

SECT.

Sect. II.

But we have (you wil say) bounds for our restraint which the free spirit hates; as never being pleased, but with a full liberty both of prospect and passage; Any barre, whether to the foot, or to the eye, is a death: Oh vain affectation of wild, and roving curiosity! If their desires cannot be bounded, yet their motions must; When they have the full sight of heaven above them, they cannot climbe up into it; they cannot possibly see that whole glorious contignation; and when the whole earth lies open before them, they can measure but some small peeces of it. How can

they be quiet till they have purchased *Tycho Brahe* his prospective trunk of thirty two foot long, wherby they may discover a better face of heaven; some lesser Planets moving round about the Sun, and the Moonets about Saturn and Jupiter, & the mountains, seas and vallies in the Moon? How can they rest til having acquainted themselves with the constellations of our Hemisphere, they have passed the Equinoctiall, and seen the triangle, the crosse, and the clouds, and the rest of the unknown stars that move above the other Pole? And when all this is done, they are but who they were, no whit better, no whit wiser, and perhaps far lesse happy than those, who never smelt

any but their own smoak; never knew any star, but Charls-wayn, the morning star, and the seven. For me, I do not envy, but wonder at the licentious freedome, which these men thinke themselves happy to enjoy; and hold it a weakneſſe in thoſe minds, which cannot find more advantage and pleasure in confinement, & retiredneſſe; Is it a small benefit, that I am placed there, where no oathes, no blasphemies beat my eares? where my eyes are in no perill of wounding objects; where I hear no invectives, no false doctrines, no sermocinations of Iron-mongers, Felt-makers, Coblers, Broom-men, Grooms, or any other of those inspired

ignorants; no curses, no ribaldries: where I see no drunken comessations, no rebellious routs, no violent oppressions, no obscene rejoicings, nor ought else that might either vex or affright my soul. This, this is my liberty: who whiles I sit here quietly lockt up by my keeper, can pity the turmoils & distempers abroad, and bless my own immunity from those too common evills.

Sect. III.

IS it the necessity, and force of the restraint; since those things which we do voluntarily, are wont to passe from us with delight, which being imposed seem grievous to us? Why should not

I have so much power over my will as to make that voluntary in me, to undergoe, which another wills forceably to inflict? the mind that is truely subacted to Grace, can so frame it self to what it must suffer, as that it finds a kind of contentment in patience; Thus we daily doe to the Almighty, whose wil, by our humble submission, wee make ours; and pray that we may doe so: And who can restraine us without him? If therefore my wise and holy God think it best to cage me up, by the command of authority (upon what cause soever) why should not I think this inclosure a better liberty: who know there is perfect freedome in his obedience? So

then, if conſtraint make a priſoner, I am none; who am moſt willingly, where my God will have me: And, if my will did not often carry me out of my owne walls at home, why cannot it as well confine me to a larger compaſſe of the Tower?

SECT. IV.

IS it ſolitude and Infrequence of viſitation? This may perhaps be troubleſom to a man that knows not to entertaine himſelfe; but, to him that can hold continual diſcourſe with his owne heart, no favor can be greater; For of all other, theſe ſelf-conferences are moſt beneficiall to the ſoul; Other mens communication may ſpend

ſpend the time with more advantage of learning, or mirth; but none can yeeld us ſo much ſpirituall profit, as our own ſoliloquies: And when all is done, the Greeks ſaid well; It is not much, but uſefull that makes truely wiſe. Beſides this, wee can never have the opportunity of ſo good company, as when we are alone: Now, we enjoy the ſociety of God, and his Angels, which wee cannot ſo freely doe in a throng of viſitants: When God would expreſſe his greateſt intireneſſe with his Church, *Ducam eam in ſolitudinem*, ſaith he: *I will bring her into the wilderneſſe, and there ſpeak comfortably to her.* We cannot expect ſo ſweet converſation with God, in

ὁ χρήσιμ'. οὐκ ὁ πολλ' ἐστὶ σοφός.

Hoſ. 2. 14.

the preſence of others, as apart. Oh the divine benefit of an holy ſolitarineſſe, which no worldly heart can either know, or value! What care I for ſeeing of men, when I may ſee him that is inviſible? What care I for chatting with friends, when I may talk familiarly with the God of heaven? What care I for entertaining mortall gueſts, when I may with *Abraham* & his Nephew *Lot* feaſt the Angels of God: and (which were too great a word, if God himſelf had not ſpoken it) be attended by them?

SECT. V.

IS it the reproach and ignominy that commonly attends

tends the very name of an imprisonment? weak minds may be affected with every thing: but, with solid judgements, it is not the punishment, but the cause that makes either the Martyr, or the malefactor. S. *Pauls* bonds were famous: and *Petrus ad vincula* is not without a note of yearly celebrity: and it were hard, if so many blessed Martyrs, and Confessors, who have lived, and dyed in Jayles, for the truths sake, should not have brought prisons (such as they may be) into some credit. Shortly, as notorious crimes may be at liberty, so even innocence may be under restraint; yet those crimes no whit the better, nor this innocence the worse. Be-

Besides (that which perhaps came not within your freer thoughts) every restraint is not for punishment; there is a restraint for safety, a *salva custodia*, as well as *arcta*, such is this of ours: This strong Tower serves not so much for our prison, as for our defence; what horror soever the name may carry in it: I blesse God for these wals, out of which I know not where we could (for the time) have been safe from the rage of the mis-incensed multitude: Poor seduced soules, they were taught it was pieto to be cruel; and were misperswaded to hate and condemn us for that, (which should have procured their reverence, and honor) even that

that holy station which wee hold in Gods Church; and to curse those of us, who had deserved nothing but their thanks and prayers: railing on our very profession in the streets; and rejoycing in our supposed ruine: Father, forgive them, for they knew not what they did: Here wee were out of the danger of this mis-raised fury, and had leasure to pray for the quenching of those wild-fires of contention, and causeless malice, which (to our great grief) we saw wicked incendiaries dayly to cast amongst Gods dear, & wel-minded people. Here we have well & happily approved with the blessed Apostle, that (what ever our restraint be) the Word of

of God is not bound; With what liberty, with what zeale, with what successe hath that been preached by us to all comners? Let them say, whether the Tower had ever so many, such guests, or such benedictions; so as if the place have rendred us safe, wee have endeavoured to make it happy; Wherein our performances have seemed to confute that which *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* long since observed, that the minde laden with heavy burdens of affliction, is not able to doe that service, which it can doe when it is free and at ease; Our troubles through Gods mercy made us more active, and our labours more effectuall.

Non enim potest mens attrita & oneribus & importunitatibus gravata, tantum boni peragere, quantum delectata & oppressionibus soluta. Cornel. ep. 2. Rufo Coepiscopo.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

ADde unto these (if you please) the eminent dignity of the place, such as is able to give a kind of honor to captivity, the ancient seat of Kings, chosen by them, as for the safe residence of their Royall Persons, so for their Treasury, their Wardrobe, their Magazine; all these precious things are under the same custody with our selves; sent hither, not as to prison, but a repositorie; and why should wee thinke our selves in any other condition? How many worthy inhabitants make choice to fixe their abode within these walls, as not knowing where to bee happier?

pier? the place is the ſame to us, if our will may be the ſame with theirs; they dearly purchaſe that, which coſt us nothing but our fees; nothing makes the difference, but the meer conceit of Liberty, which, whiles I can give to my ſelf, in my thoughts, why am I pitied as miſerable, while their happineſſe is applauded?

You ſee then, how free I am in that which you miſcall my priſon; ſee now, how little cauſe I have to affect this liberty, which you imagine mee to want; ſince I ſhall be, I can be no other than a Priſoner abroad: There is much difference of Priſons; One is ſtraight and cloſe locked, ſo farre from admitting viſitants, that it

ſcarce

scarce allowes the Sunne to look in at those crosse-barred grates; another, is more large and spacious, yeelding both Walkes and accesse; Even after my discharge from these Walls, I shall be yet sure to bee a Prisoner, both these wayes; For, what is my body but my prison in the one? and what is the world, but my prison in the other kind?

SECT. VII.

TO begin with the former, never was there a more close prisoner than my soul is for the time to my body; Close in respect of the essence of that spirit, which since its first Mittimus, never stirr'd out from this strait room; never can doe,

doe, till my Gaole-delivery.

If you respect the improvement of the operations of that busie soul, it is any where, it is successively, every where; no place can hold it, none can limit it; but if you regard the immortal, and immateriall substance of it, it is fast lockt up within these walls of clay, till the day of my changing come; even as the closest Captive may write letters to his remotest friends, whilest his person is in durance; I have too much reason to acknowledge my native Jayle, and feel the true Symptoms of it to my pain; what darknesse of sorrow have I here found? what little-ease of melancholicke lodgings? what manacles and

and shackles of cramps? yea what racks of torturing convulsions?

And if there bee others, that find lesse misery in their prison, yet there is no good soul, but findes equall restraint: That spirituall substance, which is imprisoned within us, would faine bee flying up to that heaven whence it descended; these walls of flesh forbid that evolation, (as *Socrates* cal'd it of old) and will not let it out, till the God of spirits (who placed it there) shall unlock the doores and free the prisoner by death; He that infused life into *Lazarus*, that he might call him from the prison of the grave, must take life from us, when he cals us out of this prison of

of flesh; *I desire to be loosed, and to be with Christ*, (saith the Apostle) as some versions expresse it; whiles we are chained to this flesh, we can have no passage to heaven, no free conversation with our Saviour; Although it was the singular privilege of that great Doctor of the Gentiles, that he was in heaven before his dissolution: whether in the body, or out of the body, he knew not: How far that rapture extended, whether to both soule and body, if he knew not, how should we? But this we know, that such extasie and vision was in him, without separation of the soul from the body; which another should hope for in vaine: And for him, so he saw this glory

glory of Paradice, that hee could not yet enjoy it: Before he, or we, can be bleſſed with the fruition of Chriſt, we muſt be looſed, that is, freed from our clog, & our chaine of this mortall body.

What but our priſon wals can hinder us here, from a free proſpect? What but theſe wals of fleſh can hinder me from a cleare viſion of God? I muſt now, for the time, ſee as I may: Nothing can enter into my ſoule, but what paſſes through my ſenſes, & partakes, in ſome ſort, of their earthlineſſe; when I am freed from them, I ſhal ſee as I am ſeen; in an abſtracted & heavenly way; ſo as one ſpirit apprehends another: I doe now, at the beſt, ſee thoſe ſpiritu-

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all objects darkly, by the eye of faith, as in a glasse; and that not one of the clearest neither: (Alas, what dim representations are these, that I can attaine to here, of that Majesty, whose sight shal make me blessed?) I shal once see as I am seen, face to face; the face of my glorified soul shal see the face of that all-glorious Deity, and in that sight be eternally happy; It is enough for a prisoner in this dungeon of clay, to know of, and fore-expect, such felicity, whereof these earthly grieves render him as yet uncapable.

SECT. VIII.

VVOe is me! how many prisons doe we passe

paſſe? ſo ſoon as ever this divine ſoul is infuſed into this fleſh, it is a priſoner; neither can any more paſſe out of this skin, till this frame of nature be demoliſhed: And now, as the ſoul of this Embryon is inſtantly a priſoner to the body, ſo the body is alſo a priſoner in the womb, wherein it is formed: what darkneſſe, what cloſeneſſe, what uneaſineſie, what nuiſance is there in this Dungeon of nature? There he muſt lye in an uncouth poſture, for his appointed moneth, till the native bonds being looſed, and the doores forced open, hee ſhall be by an helpfull obſtetrication drawn forth into the larger priſon of the world; there indeed he hath elbow-room enough:

enough: but all that wide scope cannot free him from a true incarceration: Who knowes not that there are many differences, and latitudes of restraint? A *Simeon* may imprison and enchaine himself in the compasse of a pillar, not allowing himself the ease of his whole dimensions; *Peter* may be lockt up in a larger Jayl, betwixt his two Leopards (as that Father tearms them;) S. *Paul* may be two years allowed to be a Prisoner in his own hired house, but under the guard of his keeper, and not without his chain: There are those, who upon hainous, and dangerous occasions may be kept close under many locks; there are prisoners at large, who have the liber-

Acts ult.

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ty of the Tower; yet even theſe laſt notwithſtanding the allowance of ſpacious walks, & freſh gardens, are no other than acknowledged priſoners: Such is my condition to the world, when I am at my fulleſt liberty. It is true, that when I look back to the ſtraitneſs of my firſt, and native priſon, and compare it with the large extent of that wide world, into which I am brought, I may wel with *Iſaac's* Herds-menſay, *Rehoboth, For now, the Lord hath made me room*: but when *I* compare that world, wherein *I* am, with that whereto *I* aſpire, and which *I* know to be above, and look to enjoy; *I* can ſee nothing here, but meer priſon-walls, and pro-

Gen. 36. 22.

fesse my life to be no other than a perpetuall durance.

SECT. IX.

Magna domus homuli.

IF *Varro* said of old, that the world was no other than the great house of little man, I shall be bold to adde what kind of house it is; It is no other than his prison, yea, his dungeon.

Far be it from me to disparage the glorious worke of my omnipotent Creator: I were not worthy to look upon this large, and glittering roof of heaven, nor to see the pleasant varieties of these earthly landskips, If I did not adore that infinite power, and wisdome which appears in this goodly, and immense fabrick; and confesse

feſſe the marvellous beauty of that majeſtick, and tranſcendent workmanſhip; Rather when I ſee the *Moone and the Stars, which thou haſt ordained*, I ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Lord what is man?* Pſal. 8. 3, 4.

But, O God, it is no diſhonor to thee, that though this be a fair houſe, yet thou haſt one ſo much better than it, as a Palace is beyond a Jayl.

This beauty may pleaſe, but that raviſheth my ſoul: Here is light, but dim, and dusky, in reſpect of that inacceſſable light, wherein thou dwelleſt: Here is a glorious Sun, that illumineth this inferior world, but thou art the Sun who enlighteneſt that world above: Thou, to whom thy created Sun is but a ſhadow.

Here we converse with beasts, or at the best, with men; there with blessed souls, and heavenly Angels: Here some frivolous delights are intermixed with a thousand vexations; There in thy presence is the fulnes of joy: So then, let the sensuall heart mis-place his paradise here in the world, it shal not passe for other with me, than my prison: How can it? Why should it? for what other termes do I find here?

What blinde light looks in here at these scant loop-holes of my soul? Yea, what darknes of ignorance rather possesses me? what bolts and shackles of heavy crosses do I bear about me? how am I fed here with the bread of

affliction? how am I watched and beset with evill spirits? how contumeliously traduced? how disdainfully lookt upon? how dragging the same chaine with the worst malefactors? how disabled to all spiritual motions? how restrained from that full liberty of enjoying my home, and my God in it, which I daily expect in my dissolution? when therefore, I am releated from these wals, I am still imprisoned in larger. and so shall be til the Lord of the Spirits of all flesh (who put me here) shall set me free; and all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till this my changing come.

SECT. X.

YOu ſee then by this time, how little reaſon I have to be too much troubled with this impriſonment, or my friends for me; But indeed, there are ſome ſorts of Priſoners, which neither you nor I can have teares enow to bewaile: and thoſe eſpecially of two kinds.

The one, thoſe that are too much affected with an outward bondage: The other, thoſe that are no whit affected with a ſpirituall.

In the firſt rank are they that ſink under the weight of their Irons: Poor impotent ſoules, that groaning under the cruelty of a Turkiſh thraldom, or a Spaniſh

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Inquisition, want Faith to bear them out, against the impetuous violences of their tormentors: I sorrow for their sufferings; but for their fainting more: Could they see the Crown of Glory, which the righteous Judge holds ready for their victorious Patience, they could not but contemn paine, and all the pomp of Death, and confesse that their Light affliction (which is but for a moment) works for them a far more exceeding & eternall weight of glory. But alas, it is the weakness of their eyes, that they onely look at the things that are seen, close walls, heavy fetters, sharp scourges, mercilesse racks, and other dreadfull engins of torture, and

ſee not the things which are not ſeen, the glorious reward of their victory, bleſſedneſſe. Had they had *Stephens* eyes, they would have emulated his martyrdome; Surely whoſoever ſhal but read the ſtory of the mother and the ſeven brothers in the *Maccabees*, & that of the fourty Armenian Martyrs frozen to death, reported by *Gaudentius*, and ſhall there ſee the fainting revolter dying uncomfortably in the Bath, whiles the other thirty and nine (together with their new converted Keeper) are crowned by an Angel from heaven, cannot chuſe (except he have nothing but ice in his boſome) but find in himſelf a diſpoſition emulous of their courage, & am-

ambitious of their honour; But alas, what ever our desires, and purposes may be, it is not for every one to attaine to the glory of Martyrdome; this is the highest pitch, that earthly Saints are capable of: He must be more than a man, whom paine and death cannot remove from his holy resolutions, and especially, the lingring execution of both. It is well if an age can yeeld one, *Mole:* In what termes shall *I* commemorate thee, O thou blessed Confessor, the great example of invincible constancy, in these back-sliding times (if at least thy rare perseverance be not more for wonder than imitation) whom thirty yeares tedious durance in the Inqui-

quisitory at *Rome*, could not weary out of thy sincere profession of the Evangelical truth? All this while thou wert not allowed the speech, the sight of any, but thy persecutors: Here was none to pity thee, none to exhort thee; If either force of perswasion, or proffers of favour, or threats of extremity, could have wrought thee for thy perversion, thou hadst not at last dyed ours. Blessed bee the God of all comfort, who having stood by thee, & made thee faithfull to the death, hath now given thee a Crown of life and immortality; and left thee a noble patterne of Christian Fortitude, so much more remarkable, as lesse frequently followed.

Whether

Whether I look into the former, or the present times, I finde the world full of shrinking professors.

Amongst the first Christians, persecution easily discovered four sorts of cowardly Renegadoes; The first, and worst, whom they justly stiled Idolaters, that yielded to all the publicke formes of worship to those false Gods: The second, Sacrificers, who condescended so far, as to some kinde of immolation unto those fained deities, or, at least, to a casting of those things which were thus offered: The third, Incensers, such as (with *Marcellinus* himself) came on so far, as to cast some graines of incense into the Idols fire: The last were their

their Libellaticks, such as privately by themselves, or by some allowed proxey, denyed the Faith, yet with their money bought out this ignominy, and sinne of any publick Act of Idolatry.

Not to speak of those many thousands which fell downe before *Solyman* the second, and held up their finger to signifie their conversion to his Mahometisme, for ease of their taxations? how many do we hear of daily of all nations, and some (which I shame and grieve to say) of our owne, who yeeld to receive circumcision, and to renounce their Saviour? Oh the lamentable condition of those distressed Christians! If constant to their profession, they

they live in a perpetual purgatory of torment; If revolting, they run into the danger of an everlasting damnation in hell; Even this gentle restraint puts me into the meditation of their insupportable durance; Why do not all Christia nhearts bleed with the sense of their deplorable estate? why is not our compassion heightened, according to the depth of their perill, and misery?

What are our bowels made of, if they yearne not at their unexpressible calamity? Ye rich Merchants, under whose imployment many of these poor soules have thus unhappily miscarried, how can you blesse your selves in your baggs, whiles you see theme mbers of

of Christ your Saviour, thus torn from him, for want of a petty ransome? Ye eminent persons whom God hath advanced to power & greatness, how can you sleep quietly upon your pillows, whiles you think of the cold and hard lodgings, the hungry bellies, the naked and waled backs of miserable Christians? Lastly, what fervent prayers should we all, that professe the dear name of Christ, poure out unto the God of heaven for the strengthning of the faith & patience of these afflicted souls against the assaults of violence? and for their happy and speedy deliverance out of their woefull captivity?

SECT.

Sect. XI.

THese prisoners are worthy of our deep compassion; as those, who are too sensible of their owne misery; Others there are, who are so much more worthy of greater pity, by how much they are lesse aprehensive of their need of it; plausible prisoners under a spirituall tyranny; whose very wills are so captived to the powers of darknesse, that to chuse they would be no other than bondmen; pleasing themselves in those chains, whose weight is enough to sink their souls into hell; such are they, who have yielded themselves over to be enthralled by any known

known sin; No men under heaven do so much applaud themselves in the conceit of their liberty; none so great slaves as they; If the very Stoick Philosophers had not enough evinced this truth, Divinity should: Indeed, the world is a worse kind of *Algier*, full of miserable captives; here lies one so fettered in lust, that hee rots againe; there another, so laden with drunken excesse, that he can neither goe nor stand, and in very deed is not his owne man: here, one so pinched with golden fetters, that he can neither eate, nor sleep, nor at all enjoy himself; there, another so pined with envy, that he is forced to feed on his owne heart: here, one so tormented with anger,

anger that hee is stark mad for the time; and cares not how hee mischieves himself in a furious desire to hurt others: there, another so racked with ambition, that he is stretched beyond his own length, and lives in the pain of a perpetuall self-extension.

These, and all others of this kinde are most miserable prisoners, chained up for ever-lasting darknesse: So much more worthy of our pity, as they are lesse capable of their own: Spend your compassion (if you please) upon these deplorable subjects; But for me, wish me (if you will) as free from any imputation of evill, as I was, and am from the thought of it; wish mee

in your free champian, where I may have no hedge ſo much as to confine my eye: wiſh me happy in the ſociety of ſo dear and noble a Friend; but in the meane while, think of me no otherwiſe, than as a Free Priſoner, And

Yours thankfully devoted in all faithfull obſervance,

J. N.

FINIS.

Severall Tractates

written by Dr. *Hall* B. of *Norwich*, In and since his Imprisonment and Retiring. Namely,

1. THe *Devout Soul*, and *Free Prisoner*.
2. The Remedy of *Discontentment*, *Or*, A Treatise of *Contentation* in whatsoever condition.
3. The Peace-maker, *laying forth the right way of* Peace *in matter of Religion*.
4. The Balme of Gilead, *Or*, Comforts for the distressed; both Morall and Divine.
5. Christ Mysticall, *Or*, The blessed union of *Christ* & his *Members*:
   To which is addded,
   An holy Rapture, *Or*, A Patheticall Meditation of the love of Christ.
   Also, The Christian laid forth in his whole disposition and carriage.
6. A Modest Offer, tendred to the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*.
7. Select Thoughts in two Decades,

with the breathing of the Devout Soule.

8. *Pax Terris.*

9. Imposition of Hands.

10. The Revelation unrevealed——
Concerning,
The thousand yeares reigne of the Saints with Christ on Earth.

11. *Susurrium cum Deo.*
Or,
Holy Selfe-Conferences of the Devout Soul, upon sundry choice Occasions. Now in the Presse, and never before Printed.